

YORK U

DECEMBER 2004



PLUS:
Testing Einstein
York's Bouncing Olympian
Hot Coffee Hangouts

Best In Class

York's Undergrad Stars

INSIDE



COVER PHOTOGRAPHY:
LINDSAY LOZON
STYLING: JENNIFER LOPEZ

YORKU

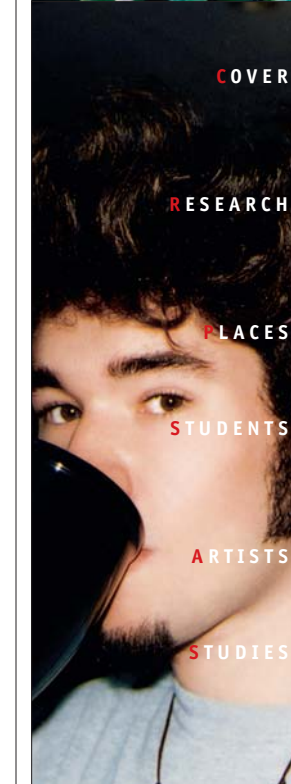
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DECEMBER 2004

This year, women make a comeback. BY BERTON WOODWARD

Class Acts

A YEAR AGO, we put a group of students on the cover beside the line, Top of the Class. Profiled in all their high-achieving glory were seven top-ranking students, one from each undergraduate Faculty, selected by accumulated grade point average (GPA) at the end of second year. Even before we went to press, we thought we were onto a story that didn't have to end with that issue. York students, it appeared, had the same sense – the copies flew off the campus stands. And so was born what we hope will be a continuing feature. In this issue, you'll find the second annual listing of York's top students at the middle point of their undergrad careers.

Why did we choose the end of second year? Obviously, you have to choose some point in time to take the sounding. This one, we felt, shows how these students are doing when they are well established in university, not high school or their transitional first year. Moreover, we wanted to profile students who are still at York, so grad year was out – and some programs only last three years. That settled, we went with GPA ranking as the arbiter of "top" (the precise numbers, kept confidential by the University, were provided by the students themselves), as there just isn't any other measure or evaluation more fair for this purpose. And I must say, the people who emerged in our profiles, both last year and this, show that character, talent and flair seem to go hand in hand with great marks.

I'm giving you some of this background because, as you might imagine, our feature and its assumptions did raise



some controversy last year. An official of the Engineering Society wrote us complaining that the engineers' course load might be too heavy for them to qualify on GPA. "Your article had a lot of smart people in it, but I believe you overlooked some even smarter and more well-rounded people in York's engineering program," he said. A department Chair noted that only two of the seven were women: "How far did you guys look?" Well, the numbers were the numbers, I replied – "I'm sure the women will come roaring back next year." And they have: five out of seven this year. I also told the engineers it was up to them to get a female engineer into this year's science standings, but they'll have to settle for a male biologist.

There are other intriguing threads: two members of the Baha'i faith, two people born outside Canada, three first-generation Canadians. And that's the beauty of this survey. Balances such as men and women, migrant and native-born, religious and non-religious, PlayStation and Xbox lover, will shift each year. Feel free to draw conclusions if you wish about why these people excel. All I know is that their bright faces shine a whole lot of glory on their university. ■

Send letters, submissions, comments and ideas to editor@yorku.ca.

YORKU

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY HORST HERGET

York has always been a centre of excellence open to all. BY LORNA R. MARSDEN

Rejecting Privilege

THE REASON YORK WAS CONCEIVED OF and founded in the late 1950s was to ensure that educational excellence was available in Toronto to students from all backgrounds. Our founders had a radically inclusive agenda. They rejected – and we now reject – the notion that academic excellence is a privilege given only to any kind of elite: ethnic, religious, geographical, historical or otherwise. This is why at York we are always keen to provide scholarships for our students based on both merit and need. Today, over 35 per cent of our students benefit from some kind of scholarship or bursary – and we're working hard to raise funds for more.

Ontario's Postsecondary Review discussion paper, issued in October by former premier Bob Rae, has committed to protecting and increasing access to higher education for students of all backgrounds. This is a very Canadian dream and one



Rae's dream can only be

that I endorse wholeheartedly. However, that dream can only be realized if there are high-quality institutions to which a student can gain access.

Finance is a considerable barrier to participation in postsecondary education, and for many middle or low-income families this means that a high-quality institution needs to be in their region. Eighty-five per cent of York students commute to university and many are shouldering other responsibilities that include working and supporting families. Residence life for them is not an option.

Almost half of our students come from the 416 area, and almost half from the 905 area (we also welcome students from across Canada and across the world). York is geographically placed at the centre of the Greater Toronto Area and in 2002-2003 pumped \$3.4 billion into the GTA economy. York prides itself on being an undergraduate, graduate, teaching and research university – a true centre of excellence open to all who qualify academically.

So what is a high-quality university? In our view, it is one where research and teaching are integrated in the classroom as

Lorna R. Marsden is York's president and vice-chancellor.

well as in the laboratory or studio; where faculty can take time with students as individuals; where both expectations

realized if there are high-quality institutions that a student can get into

of student performance and opportunities to demonstrate performance are high and students are recognized for what they accomplish. All this requires a student-faculty ratio that permits personal attention, and we work very hard to achieve that with our approximately 2,400 teaching faculty. Our plans call for even greater improvements in future. We will have more faculty, more graduate students, more diverse programs and an even better experience for every student.

Our dream is to build communities connected to all aspects of the educational experience, where our citizens can go as far as their abilities will carry them. We already are the university where research for UNESCO and NASA co-exists, where research into vision and schoolyard bullying is carried out in our own unique, interdisciplinary fashion.

We are big, certainly, offering an impressive range of programs and opportunities. In fact, York's Keele campus is the largest postsecondary campus in Canada. But as we have grown, there are two factors on which we have not compromised: the pursuit of excellence in research and teaching and the desire to remain open to all who qualify academically. We believe Canadians are very proud of this and we hope you are, too. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY COREY MIHALIUK

Full of Bounce

York student and Olympic medallist Karen Cockburn is at the top of her game

PHOTOGRAPHY BY EDWARD GAJDEL



To see world-champion trampolinist Karen Cockburn bounce two storeys into the air, then tuck and twist and dip and dive, is like watching a swallow fly. Her coach calls her style “elegant”. Sports writers call it “flawless” and “perfect”. This 24-year-old’s aerobic grace and skill have reaped the world’s biggest awards: Olympic silver in Athens this August, Olympic bronze in Sydney four years ago and World Cup gold in 2003 – all firsts for Canada.

Cockburn took up trampolining at age 11 to improve her diving. A year later she won the provincial juniors. By 14, she held the Canadian senior title and was competing internationally. At five-foot-three, she is tall for a jumping gymnast. Knee injuries have not weakened an explosive kick that can launch her 24 feet into the air. But the secret to her success, says her long-time coach Dave Ross, is her quiet determination. “She’s had it from the get-go. I call her the silent warrior. She just decides what she wants to do and works at it.” Ross, who is national team coach, has trained hundreds. “Everybody has the will to win, but how many people will sacrifice everything to do it?”

Cockburn will. In 2003, she quit York halfway through her third year in economics to train full-time for Athens. She’s back now and focused on graduating. She still practises, determined to qualify for the 2008 Olympics. “I want to be sure I don’t have regrets.” But in two years, BA in hand, she may just run away with Cirque du Soleil. Whatever she chooses, she can’t imagine giving up her sport. Since she joined the national team at 15, it has opened up whole new worlds to her. Her friends are trampolinists; her boyfriend is a trampolinist. “I love my life. I love it.” **M**

BOOKS

What They're Reading

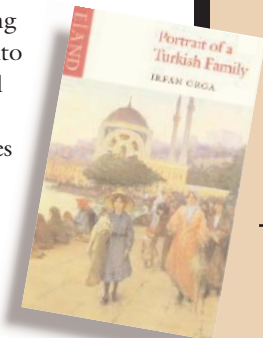
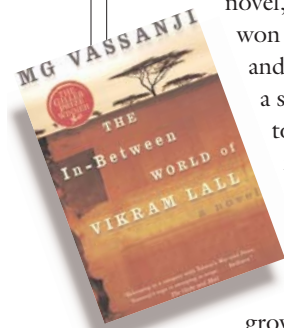
York people reveal what's on the bedside table

SUSAN SWAN, novelist, journalist, English professor:
The In-Between World of Vikram Lall
By M.G. Vassanji
Doubleday Canada

"I interviewed Vassanji before his novel, *The Book of Secrets*, won the Giller Prize and I have always felt a special connection to his work. I find myself touched by his meticulous, thoughtful and compassionate descriptions of growing up as a Punjabi Hindu in Kenya during the time of the Mau Mau uprising. He has become less elusive as a story teller – more direct, emotionally rich and surefooted."

ALAN MIDDLETON, marketing professor,
Portrait of a Turkish Family
By İRFAN ORGA
ELAND PRESS

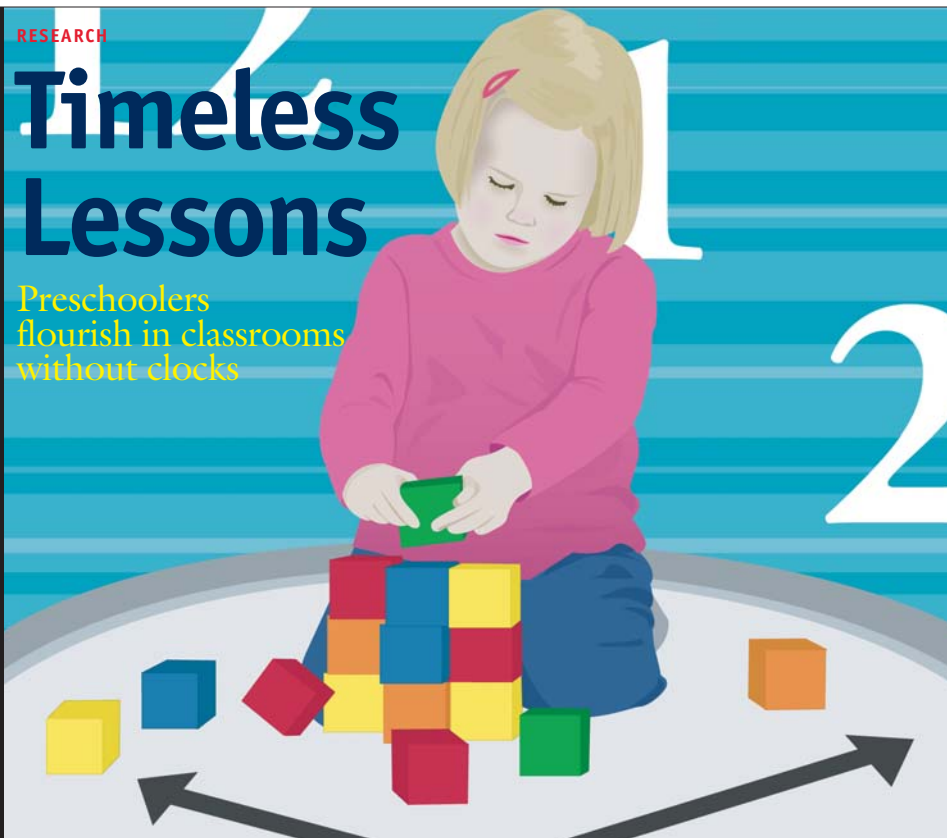
"I tend to binge on subjects that I discover and enjoy. Right now I am going through a Turkish and Greek phase; I took my first trip to Turkey last year. I am re-discovering Homer and am into a wonderful novel about a Turkish family's experiences through wars and independence in the 20th century." ■



RESEARCH

Timeless Lessons

Preschoolers flourish in classrooms without clocks



Here's a recipe for happy preschoolers: throw away the clock, discard rigid rules and let them play when and for as long as they please. Early childhood education expert Carol Anne Wien guarantees the little ones will be calmer, quieter and more cooperative. Since 1995, she's advocated "letting time go" in daycare settings. That doesn't mean a free-for-all, but respecting the complex rhythms of childhood, says Wien. She's recently documented and published the effect of doing just that on children and their caretakers at three non-profit child-care centres in Hamilton, Ont.

Taking their cue from Italy's Reggio Emilia approach, where children set their own creative agendas, staff at the centres scrapped an excess of silly rules – no door licking, no blowing on food. They abandoned timetables, except for basics like lunch, and let children choose where they wanted to play. After a few months, children concentrated longer and were generating their own games and rules. Their confidence grew because they realized adults thought they were capable. And teachers, no longer exhausted by enforcing the rules, enjoyed more positive relationships with the children. It all goes to show, concludes Wien, that rigidly structured activities are "so contradictory to how children want to learn." ■

PUBLIC SPEAKING

'In terms of mismanagement, hockey has some of the worst owners in the history of professional sports. Now the owners are asking the players to agree to a salary cap to protect themselves from themselves. It's preposterous.'

JULIAN AMMIRANTE, PhD candidate in political science who researches major-league sports, in *Canadian Business*

ILLUSTRATION BY MARIE POULIN

SERVICES

Loss Leaders



With nearly 50,000 students wandering around York's Keele campus, someone's bound to lose something. In 2003-2004, York's Lost & Found Office dealt with 2,768 patrons and had 420 items claimed by their rightful owners. Most notable item left unclaimed: an acoustic guitar. Best honesty-is-the-best-policy story: a Good Samaritan turned in a wallet containing \$120 and a graduation ring. ■

UNIVERSE

ALL FOUND:
Steve Oswin mans the booth in the Ross building

- WHAT WENT MISSING:**
- 290 PIECES OF CLOTHING
 - 219 NOTEBOOKS
 - 193 TEXTBOOKS
 - 116 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS
 - 74 PENCIL CASES
 - 71 SETS OF KEYS
 - 66 PERSONAL IDs
 - 62 PAIRS OF GLASSES
 - 51 ADDRESS BOOKS
 - 46 WALLETS
 - 41 PIECES OF JEWELRY
 - 28 BAGS
 - 26 UMBRELLAS
 - 18 PURSES
 - 1 ACOUSTIC GUITAR

FACTS

Kwik Kwiz

THINK YOU KNOW YORK? TAKE THE TEST.

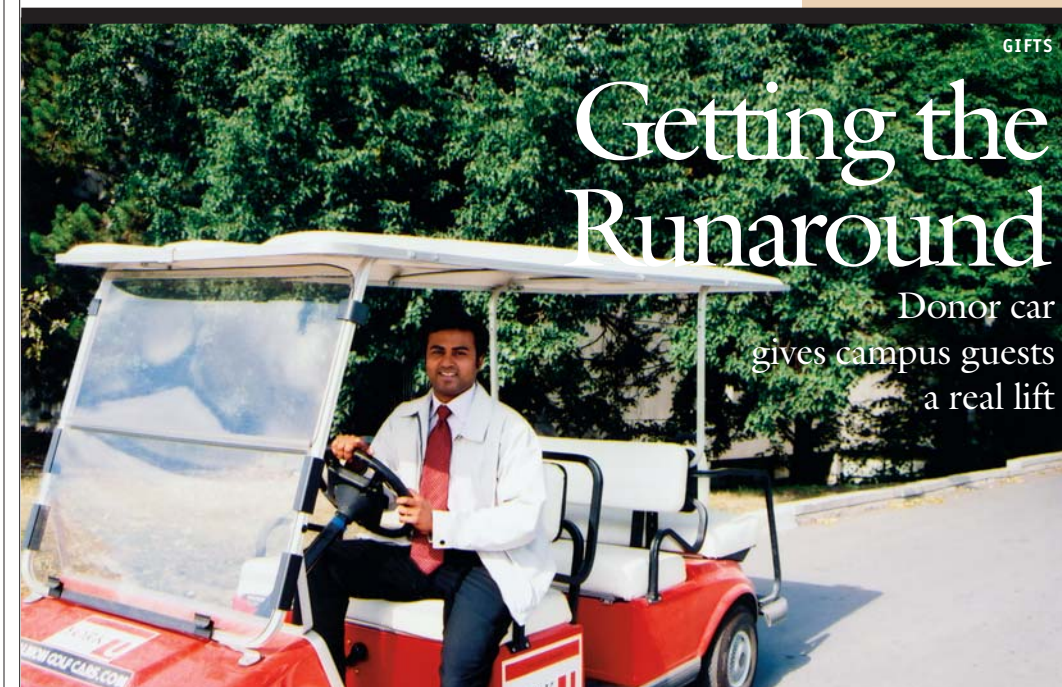
1. APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY NEWLYWEDS HAVE THEIR PICTURES TAKEN ON THE GLENDON CAMPUS EACH YEAR?
A. 15 B. 52 C. 75 D. 132
2. GLENDON HAS MORE THAN 100 VARIETIES OF WHAT ON CAMPUS?
A. WORMS B. DOMESTIC FLOWERS C. TREES D. BUTTERFLIES



GIFTS

Getting the Runaround

Donor car gives campus guests a real lift



DRIVING RANGE: The Foundation's David Narine

It's a bus! It's a plane! No, it's the environmentally friendly Village Club Car donated to the York University Foundation by Joseph Kostman. The oversized, electrically powered car (painted York red) carries up to six people, has a top speed of 25 km per hour and shuttles visitors and guests around campus in style. This is the first time Kostman has donated a club car, although he's given actual cars and vans to other non-profits, including the United Way of Greater Toronto and the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto. When Kostman's wife Rachel was alive, the couple decided they would help organizations in ways that would enhance mobility, especially for people coping with physical challenges. Given the size and scope of York's Keele campus, Kostman thought a club car would be perfect for its needs. "I was gratified that the York University Foundation gave me the chance to participate in the acquisition of a very special vehicle that will serve the York campus's transportation needs," he says. ■

3. HOW MANY STUDENT-WRITTEN NEWSPAPERS ARE THERE AT YORK (MOST OF THE TIME)?
A. 1 B. 5 C. 9 D. 13
4. HOW MANY REFERENCE QUESTIONS DO YORK LIBRARIANS ANSWER ANNUALLY?
A. 185,000 B. 155,000 C. 85,000 D. 55,000
5. CALUMET COLLEGE WAS NAMED AFTER...?
A. CALUMET FARM IN NORTHERN ONTARIO
B. SIR WINSTON CALUMET
C. A FORMER GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA
D. A NATIVE CEREMONIAL PIPE
6. WHAT IS THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CUPS OF COFFEE SOLD ON CAMPUS EACH DAY?
A. MORE THAN 6,000
B. MORE THAN 10,000
C. MORE THAN 15,000
D. MORE THAN 20,000



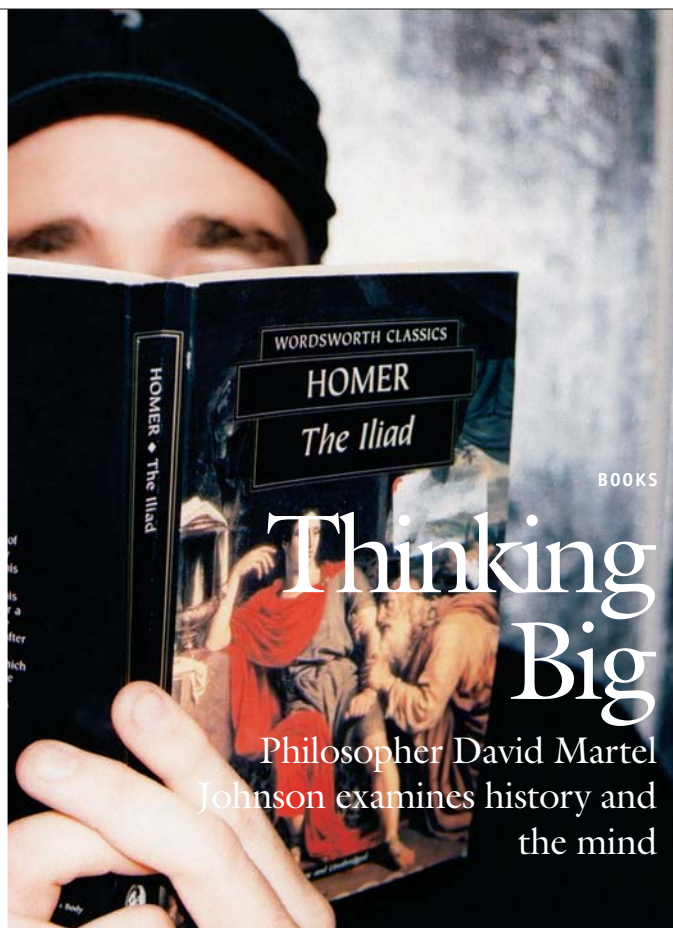
ANSWERS:

1-D; 2-C; 3-C; 4-B; 5-B; 6-A

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED

In his new book, *How History Made the Mind: The Cultural Origins of Objective Thinking*, philosopher David Martel Johnson challenges a prevailing assumption among philosophers and psychologists that “reason” or “objective thinking” is an innate, natural product of an enlarged brain, something we are born with. Reason, argues the York professor, is not genetically endowed but is the product of two cultural revolutions – the development of language and symbolic thinking during the Upper Paleolithic era, 60,000 to 40,000 years ago, and the Greek Revolution of Thought 3,000 years ago. Historians, anthropologists and archeologists have understood this for years, he insists, even if behavioural determinists and cognitive scientists have not.

The Greeks invented – yes, invented – objective thinking, which spawned the Western mind as we know it today, Johnson argues. Between 1100 and 750 BCE, a few daring Greeks began to step back, observe and record the world around them. They made impersonal generalizations and came up with natural laws in a way that runs counter to how other animals – concerned with their immediate survival – relate to their environment. This reasoned approach to everything from strategic warfare to democratic government quickly spread as other cultures perceived, or were forced to acknowledge, its advantages. Concludes Johnson: “We have good reason to believe that the sort of rational, objective, scientifically useful thinking employed by the overwhelming majority of people today would have been different if history had followed another course.” ■



BOOKS

Thinking Big

Philosopher David Martel Johnson examines history and the mind



RESEARCH

The Latest Buzz

It's not good news. York researchers have worries about the health of our most important pollinators – bees.

This collection of orchid bees might look healthy, but in reality the number capable of breeding is minuscule. Most will die without creating a replacement.

York biology Professor Laurence Packer, who specializes in bee research, and doctoral biology candidate Amro Zayed are using genetic methods to track how apparently healthy bee populations may, in fact, be on the brink of collapse. Genetic problems – likely due to environmental stress – are rendering many male bees sterile. Packer calls it “mutational meltdown”.

“Just because there appear to be a lot of bees in one spot on one given day doesn't mean much,” says Packer. “Numbers are no indication of healthy, sustainable populations. Bees move around, populations fluctuate. One year you could have thousands and the next, none.”

The genetic methods Packer and Zayed used demonstrated that the number of effectively reproducing bees in the picture at left is approximately 15. They believe their methods can reveal information about the reproductive health of all bee populations and predict their future success or demise, says Zayed.

Zayed and Packer's research on orchid bees – funded by NSERC and the American Orchid Society, and published in the prestigious *Proceedings of the Royal Society* – may one day help conservationists find ways to protect nature's premier insect workers (worth an estimated \$782 million to Canadian agriculture in 2001).

“Without bees there would be no apples, no plums, no showy wildflowers. The world as we know it would look totally different,” says Packer. “There'd be no coffee,” adds Zayed. That's enough to keep anyone awake. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED, BEE PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF LAURENCE PACKER



SPACES

Green Thumbs

A communal garden keeps on growing



PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED

Good things grow in Ontario – and on the Keele campus too. In fact, veggies, fruits and flowers flourish right in York's backyard in a campus community garden that has official University club status. The 6,000-square-foot Maloca Garden, located west of the Assiniboine Road residences, was established six years ago by a coalition of Faculty of Environmental Studies students and local community gardening and organic food organizations. It serves all sorts of people, from students, staff and faculty to alumni, says Shana Calixte, a York student and gardener. Not everyone who enjoys Maloca is a gardener though. York community members often show up to compost throughout the year, visit the garden during growing season, or come to canning workshops in the fall. “Maloca is just one more incentive for residents and visitors to explore and care for the campus space,” says Calixte. Students, staff, faculty and alumni can become Friends of the Garden. More information can be found at www.yorku.ca/maloca. ■

They are seven
of York's
smartest
undergrads –
and they have
intriguing
similarities.

BY MARTHA TANCOCK



PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY LOZON



best in class



HOLISTIC APPROACH: Paripoush

Seeking Balance

Hoda Paripoush

■ Glendon

■ GPA: 8.33



FEELING THINGS OUT: Rashidi

A Taste for Intrigue

Andrew Rashidi

■ Schulich School of Business

■ GPA: 8.7



'I AM NOT CONVENTIONAL': Ahmad

West Meets East

Habibah Ahmad

■ Atkinson Faculty of Liberal & Professional Studies

■ GPA: 8.36

GETTING THE BEST MARK in your Faculty is no mean feat. But it's also no great surprise when you look at the backgrounds of these seven remarkable undergraduates, each of whom posted the highest accumulated grade point average in their Faculty going into third year. These people, York's top-ranking students at the midpoint of the undergraduate journey, have been achievers all their lives: whether they were raised communist in China, atheist in Israel or Baha'i in Canada; whether their parents have Grade 10 education or are university professors; whether they are an only child or the youngest of six; whether they grew up in a small town or hopped continents with peripatetic parents. They also share extraordinary drive, a passion for what they are learning, insatiable curiosity and a hardy work ethic. And each one, it turns out, is motivated by a quest, a goal or a mission – usually to help make the planet a better place.

MORE THAN ANYTHING, Hoda Paripoush wanted to be a surgeon. But her math tutors doubted her ability to pass medical entrance exams; besides, hospitals smell. “The air is not fresh,” remembers the 22-year-old psychology major who used to volunteer on the chronic care ward in Brockville, Ont., where she grew up. But she clung to her dream – until she discovered naturopathic medicine. Its holistic approach to healing appealed to Paripoush as a Baha'i. “A life well lived is a life well balanced” is one tenet of a faith that propels Paripoush to strive for excellence, do her best and serve humanity. Like her refugee parents, who fled religious persecution in Iran and started all over again in Canada, she values persistence and hard work. Still, chemistry-based naturopathy will be a challenge. So Paripoush is doggedly taking one chemistry course after another along with courses on abnormal behaviour and the meaning of life. “I'm not that smart,” says the student who consistently came top in her class. “I study hard.” Her husband has learned to cook so Paripoush can study. After York, she plans four years at naturopathy college. “If you want something so much and you're willing to work hard enough, nothing can stand in your way of achieving that goal, no matter what people say.”

FOR AN ASPIRING CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT, Andrew Rashidi shows an odd penchant for risk and uncertainty. He loves the systems, structures and sheer mathematicalness of accountancy, his major, but when it comes to his personal life, the Mississauga-bred A student rejects five-year plans and daily routine. He doesn't study at a set time every day and will drop his books anytime to shoot hoops with brother Matt, play Beethoven on the piano or swim laps. If not for stock investment challenges he aced in high school, the 21-year-old former math champ would be on his way to becoming a computer engineer. “But the thought of working out algorithms every day didn't really appeal to me. With investment, there's mystery, there's intrigue, nothing is really black and white.” The Canadian-born son of followers of the Baha'i faith, who fled an intolerant Iran in the 1970s, strives for personal excellence and doesn't feel compelled by wealth, status or power. A business degree may lead to law studies and expanding the family's CA firm, where he works. “I'm still not sure that accounting will be for me. But I'm never one to close doors. I like to feel things out, see where they take me.” Whatever he does, Baha'i ideals – hard work, honesty, trustworthiness, kindness and service to others – will guide him.

HABIBAH AHMAD GREW UP in Toronto, the third of six children of Pakistani immigrants and devoted Muslims. “Islam is very central to everything I do,” says the 24-year-old student, who still lives at home and teaches Arabic to Muslim children. Islam set Ahmad's intellectual sails from an early age. Always inquisitive, she was fond of quizzing her father, a respected Muslim scholar, about the Qur'an. Her inquiry might have ended there. After high school, Ahmad followed her older siblings into the workplace, bound for mortgage and marriage. But two years later, the restless A-student used her savings to enroll at York. “I am not conventional,” she says. “I don't do things by the book.” The high-school science whiz dropped plans to study medicine and signed up instead for religion, humanities and women's studies courses. Ahmad, now a feminist, is deeply curious about the religion and Islamic traditions that shaped her. “I need to look at my religion well to see what it really says.” Her journey could lead to a PhD. The part-time library clerk saved enough money this year to travel to Spain, a crossroads for Christianity, Judaism and Islam. “It's an excellent place for me to start,” says Ahmad, who sees herself as a “product of East and West.” She dreams of teaching abroad and building bridges of understanding between the two cultures.

COVER



DO SOMETHING POSITIVE: Rapson

Fighting for Planet Earth

Aileen Rapson

■ Faculty of Environmental Studies

■ GPA: 8.4

AS A CHILD SUMMERING at her grandparents' cottage in Muskoka, Aileen Rapson trapped bugs in jars and hunted frogs. "I never had a typical fear of insects. And I remember always being fascinated with dangerous animals like snakes and sharks and tarantulas," says the 21-year-old future environmental educator from Etobicoke. She spent hours watching National Geographic nature programs and reading violent-weather books. She found her calling in a Grade 11 leadership and environmental geography workshop. "I just had no idea how badly humans were degrading Earth. I thought, 'Oh, my god, we can't let this happen. We're going to lose our natural heritage.'" The soft spoken, studious teenager – who breaks loose by dancing to Aretha Franklin, playing Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata or watching reruns of "The Simpsons" – took to publishing rants in her high-school newspaper against littering. Now, she's on the editorial board of FES's academic journal *Undercurrents*. Soon, with environmental and education degrees, she'll drop her part-time cashier job at a local pharmacy and begin teaching high school or working for non-profits. The recycling crusader and public transit advocate could never have sold cars or tubes of lipstick. "I wanted to do something positive to improve the quality of life not just for humans but for other living creatures."



STUDYING WHAT HE LOVES: Wang

Just Go For It

Xin Wang

■ Faculty of Science and Engineering

■ GPA: 8.82

IF XIN WANG HAD STAYED IN CHINA, he would have a degree in environmental engineering by now. But he quit university after three months, bored with compulsory military training and leaden lectures. Canada had granted him a student visa and he didn't hesitate to accept his uncle's offer to live in Toronto and study. Within a month he was flying across the Pacific, determined to pass required language tests and gain admission to university. His high-school marks won him an entrance scholarship to York and a chance to study what he loved – biology. First year was difficult. "It was my first time living abroad and my first year in a foreign university. I was quite nervous." He studied relentlessly and won more scholarships, easing the financial burden on his high school-educated parents. Last year, he found time to play table tennis and badminton, and tutor first-year chemistry students. The 21-year-old has embraced a Western "just-go-for-it" attitude. Once he earns a master's degree and returns to China, he plans to make unheard-of cold calls – rather than rely on *guanxi* (connections) – to find work in biotechnology research. "I want to help people and biotech is a way to find cures for diseases like cancer and AIDS."



BUSY DAYS: McGuire

Passion for Learning

Kristyn McGuire

■ Faculty of Fine Arts

■ GPA: 8.48

HIGH SCHOOL WAS MORE than a proving ground for Kristyn McGuire. It was a career lab. "Ever since Grade 9, I always knew I wanted to teach," says the 22-year-old visual arts student from Ottawa. So, while acing her lessons – she earned almost nothing but 90s – competing in sports and acting in plays, she also analyzed her teachers' classroom techniques. At York, she deliberately crams her day with classes, intramural sports, part-time jobs and volunteer work. "If you stay busy, you end up budgeting your time better and working more effectively." The Salvador Dali fan hurls herself into art and post-colonial English literature. ("I've always been interested in people who are on the sidelines, in minorities and social justice. Perhaps it comes from being part of the queer community as I grew up.") While the girl who read Plato's Republic in high school may veer into philosophy for her master's degree, teaching remains her compass. It has steered her into jobs as camp counsellor, tutor, classroom volunteer and, this summer, helping people with intellectual disabilities. As much as she loves ideas, she's "always loved being around kids. And I personally love learning and taking on new challenges. This is going to sound really idealistic, but I want to be able to help other kids learn and have the passion for learning that I have."



GREATER SELF-KNOWLEDGE: Naveh

A Romantic's Quest

Ilil Naveh

■ Faculty of Arts

■ GPA: 8.85

THE WALLS OF ILIL NAVEH'S RESIDENCE ROOM are plastered with poems, inked in her own calligraphy. One in particular, William Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" – "And I have felt/ A presence that disturbs me with the joy/ Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime/ Of something far more deeply interfused..." – moves her to tears with its rapture at divine nature. Raised a staunch atheist in Israel, the 21-year-old daughter of two professors says she is now on a quest for meaning. "I'm always looking for it, always looking for greater self-knowledge and deeper emotional bonds with other people." Studying psychology, Naveh hopes, will help her unravel the tangled yarn of human motivation and feelings, to comprehend those "raging, passionate, wild emotions" that hold her in thrall and draw her to 18th-century Romantic poetry. As a child, Naveh wouldn't play chess (too rational) with her brothers and resisted strict piano lessons, fearful a pleasure could turn into a duty. Now the Glenn Gould fan taps into deep wells of joy by playing – by ear – Bach's Goldberg Variations. Ever an A student, Naveh speaks four languages, including Russian, German and Hebrew, and juggles studies with work for a computer help-desk. One day, she hopes to do research in social psychology and teach at university with the "humility, knowledge and passion" she so admires in many of her professors. "It's a dream." ■

NORBERT BARTEL GRABS the still-packaged toy from a cluttered desk and waves it in the air, his words quickening with enthusiasm as he speaks. “When people think about scientists, they think about Einstein: he is the epitome of the scientist,” Bartel says, as the khaki drab doll with a shock of white hair stares out from its plastic bubble. “What other scientist has an action figure?”

His passion for the famed physicist is more than scholarly reverence. Bartel’s current project in York’s Department of Physics & Astronomy will help determine whether Einstein’s general theory of relativity (no, not $E=mc^2$, his other theory) was right or, unthinkable, wrong. The question is no small matter when you’re talking about space-time and gravity, the stuff that keeps our universe together. In fact, some folk outside the Faculty of Science & Engineering, where Bartel and his team are plotting the vindication (or downfall) of Einstein’s universally accepted legacy, were less than thrilled at the prospect he might tarnish a cultural icon. “We got some negative comments,” Bartel says, his ardour momentarily cooling at the memory of obtaining permissions for copyright material for his film about the project, *Testing Einstein’s Universe*.

Bartel’s enthusiasm for the work is shared by his York colleagues: Michael Bietenholz, senior research associate, Ryan Ransom, post-doctoral fellow, and graduate student Jerusha Lederman. Together, they have enjoyed a season of notoriety that began with the launch of the US\$700-million Gravity Probe B (known as GP-B) in April and continued with the separate discovery in June of what they believe is a new black hole or neutron star. Both stories made headlines and were a reminder of how teams like Bartel’s have made York a key player in Canadian space research.

Drawn to astrophysics more than 20 years ago by a desire to study fundamental aspects of science, Bartel “knew discoveries of exotic stars would lead us to something new in nature. I knew I could be part of a larger story,” he says. “You need enthusiasm, the big picture. If you lose the broader aspects you can get bogged down in the details.”

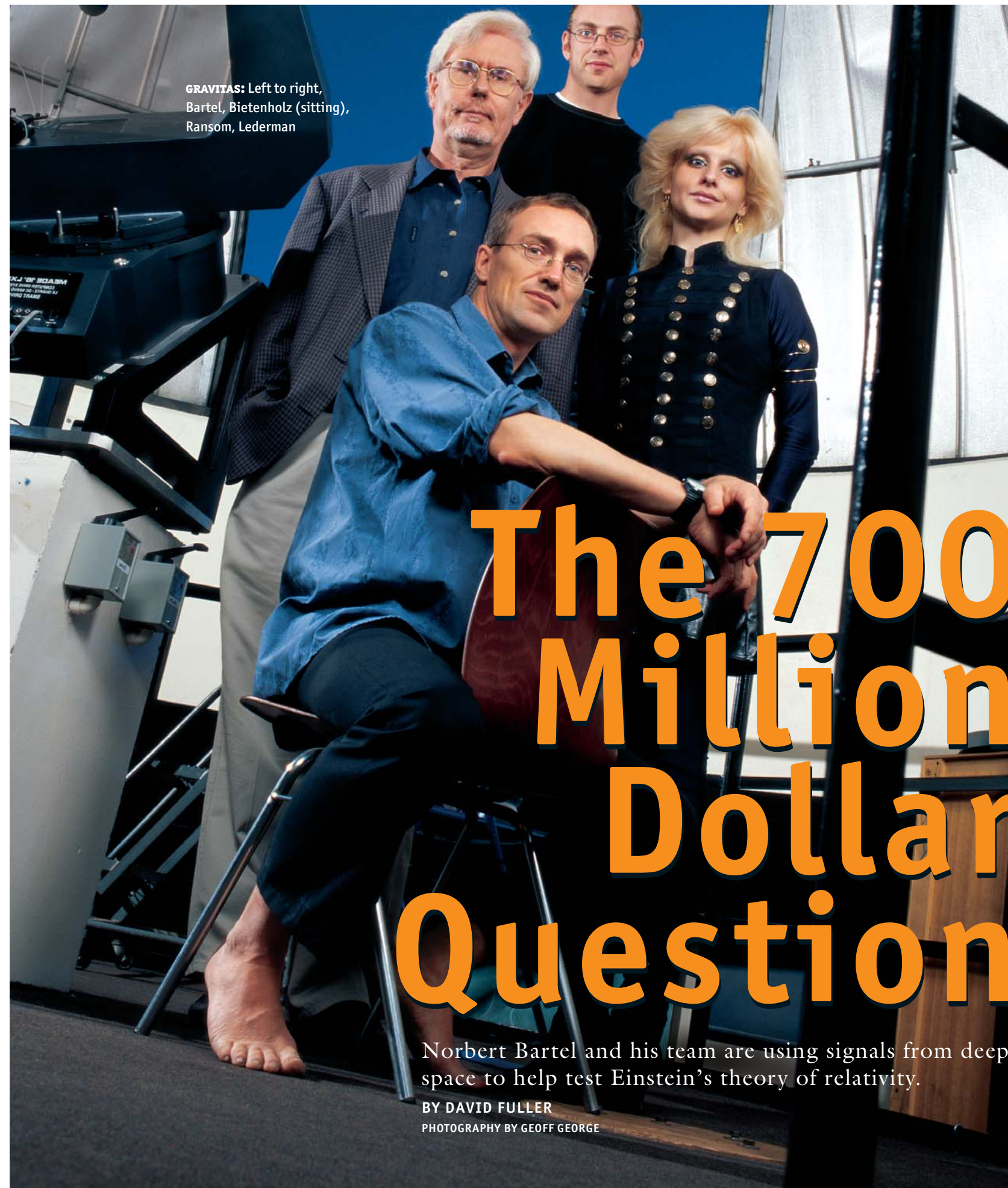
And the devil is, indeed, in the details: the team members spend their days painstakingly interpreting radio signals received by giant earth stations located around the world, aimed, for the gravity probe project, at a specific guide star, IM Pegasi, that they helped choose. Using a technique known as very-long-baseline interferometry (VLBI), their calculations will be cross-checked by scientists at Harvard University and used to interpret what the probe records. Led, since 1962, by principal investigator Francis Everitt of Stanford University, GP-B was developed by NASA and Stanford specifically to test Einstein’s theory. The researchers are looking for one number in particular: 42 milli-arcseconds, an indication of space-time warping known as “frame-dragging”, a consequence of Einstein’s theory, General Relativity, published in 1916.

“It will be quite dramatic. It’s a \$700-million question,” Bartel explains. “It will all come down to a group of people in a room with a calculator and one is going to push the button and...there will be the number, no fudging – with Einstein there is no fudging.”

Bietenholz, co-writer with Bartel and others of a paper on supernova 1986J, in which they discovered a new black hole or neutron star, appreciates the advice about the “big picture.” Bietenholz pores over results from terabytes of data gathered by more than a dozen earth stations looking for signs of change in supernovae, a specialty he shares with Bartel, one of the world’s foremost authorities on the subject. “When you make an image from the data set, it’s a small part of the process but the anticipation – you work blind for a time and, then, when you see...” His sentence is completed by pointing to a large, colourful image on his wall representing a supernova as it explodes, scattering life-matter into space.

The newest members of the team are both graduates of York’s Space & Communication Sciences Program. Ransom also received his PhD in astrophysics at York in 2003 and has been tracking GP-B’s guide star, IM Pegasi, since he wrote a master’s thesis on it in 1997. His meticulous reports on the star’s movements are the basis of York’s contribution to the project. “I’m the number cruncher,” he says. For Ransom, the “best scenario” will be if the result of the experiment is a number slightly different than what everyone expects – enough to prove Einstein was on the right track but with a deviation that leaves room for more work in the future.

Master’s student Lederman is studying the stability of quasars used as references by the guide star, an important component of the project. She is also responsible for much of the creative work that goes into the team’s Web site for the GB-P film (www.astronomyfilms.com) and related promotional and media efforts. “Norbert,” says Lederman, echoing her colleagues’ thoughts about their mentor, “is truly a special, rare, genuine and inspiring individual.” There may not be a Bartel action figure in the works just yet, but this York team is certainly part of the big space picture. ■



GRAVITAS: Left to right, Bartel, Bietenholz (sitting), Ransom, Lederman

The 700 Million Dollar Question

Norbert Bartel and his team are using signals from deep space to help test Einstein’s theory of relativity.

BY DAVID FULLER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE

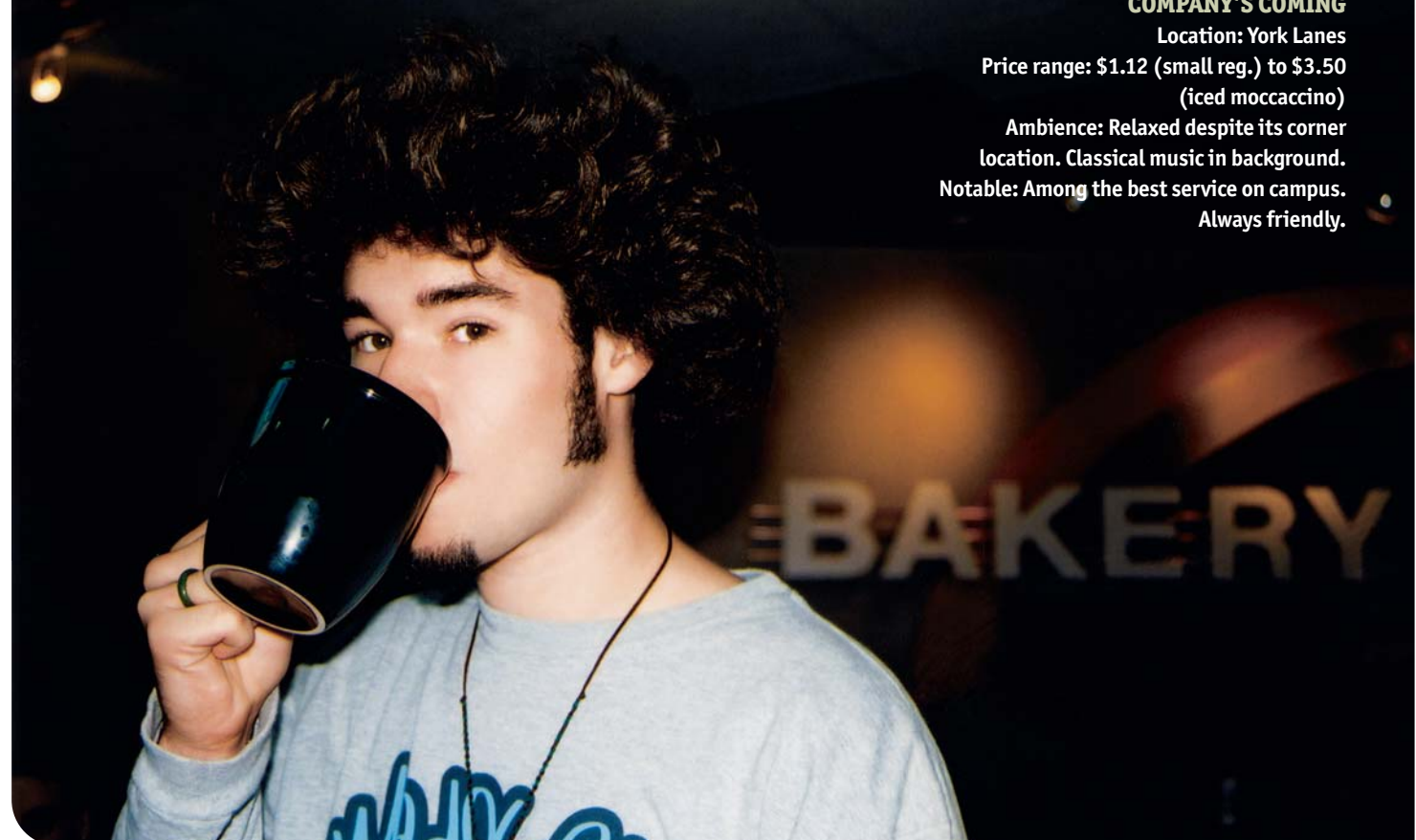
PLACES

Students, coffee, studying, writing papers. They're inextricably linked. Let's face it, it's pretty hard to write a 2,000-word essay on Shakespeare's sonnets without caffeine. Not to mention teach the course. That's why we decided, with the help of YorkU design assistant Cameron Browning (left), a fourth-year design student, and second-year political science student Robert Renouf (below), to give new students and old-timers alike a wake-up call about what's brewing at various campus coffee hot spots

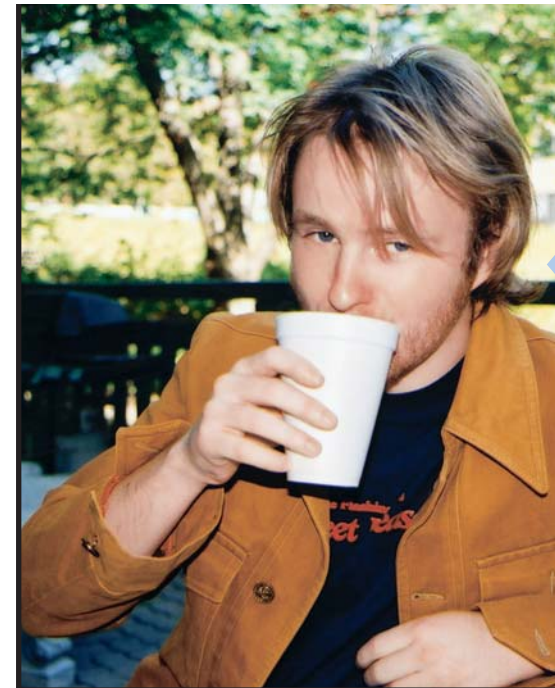
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED

MUG SHOTS

Our guide to what's brewing on campus



COMPANY'S COMING
Location: York Lanes
Price range: \$1.12 (small reg.) to \$3.50 (iced moccacino)
Ambience: Relaxed despite its corner location. Classical music in background.
Notable: Among the best service on campus. Always friendly.



MICHELANGELO'S CAFETERIA
Location: Atkinson Bldg.
Price range: \$1.35 (reg.) to \$3.00 (latte)
Ambience: Cafeteria/dining hall/70s rec room
Notable: First-rate cappuccino/espresso, served in proper china cups. Nice outdoor patio. Stone tables. Smokers' hangout.

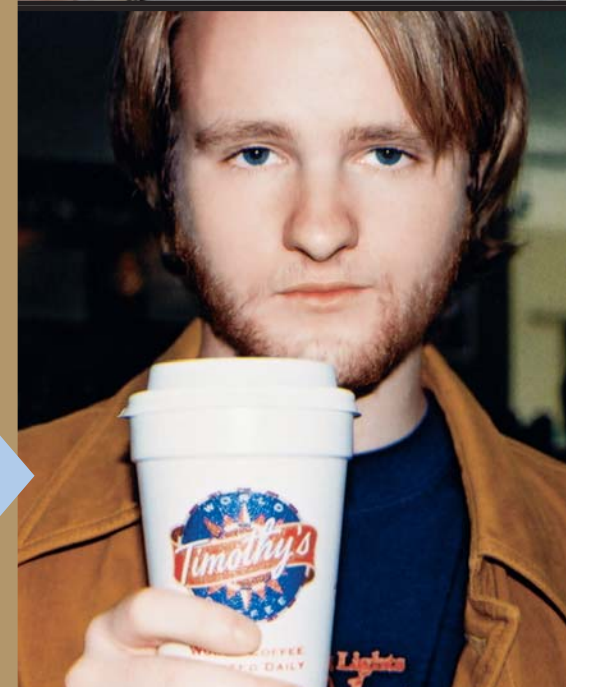
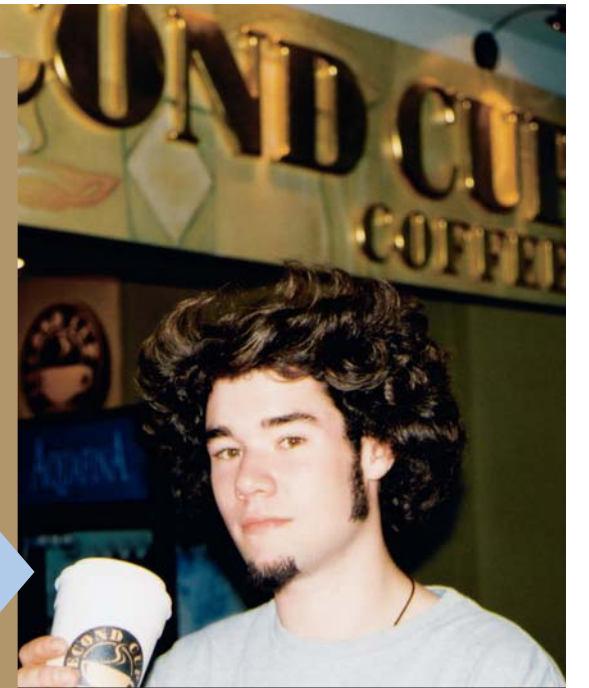
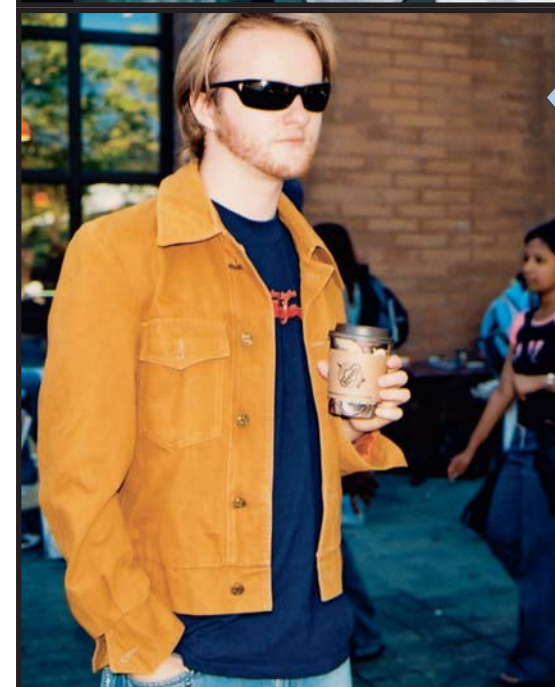
SECOND CUP
Location: York Lanes
Price range: \$1.45 (small reg.) to \$4.48 (chillatte)
Ambience: Upscale and busy.
Notable: Tables good for reading. High people-watching quotient.

TIM HORTONS
Location: William Small Centre
Price range: \$1.03 (small reg.) to \$2.99 (cappuccino)
Ambience: Ultra busy, can be chilly.
Notable: Several locations on campus. Less busy (and warmer) one in TEL Bldg.

TIMOTHY'S WORLD COFFEE
Location: Seymour Schulich Bldg.
Price range: \$1.45 (reg.) to \$3.99 (iced café mocha)
Ambience: Sleek and very Schulich.
Notable: Perfect place for future MBAs to grab a fast latte – or York's Las Nubes brand – while taking care of business.

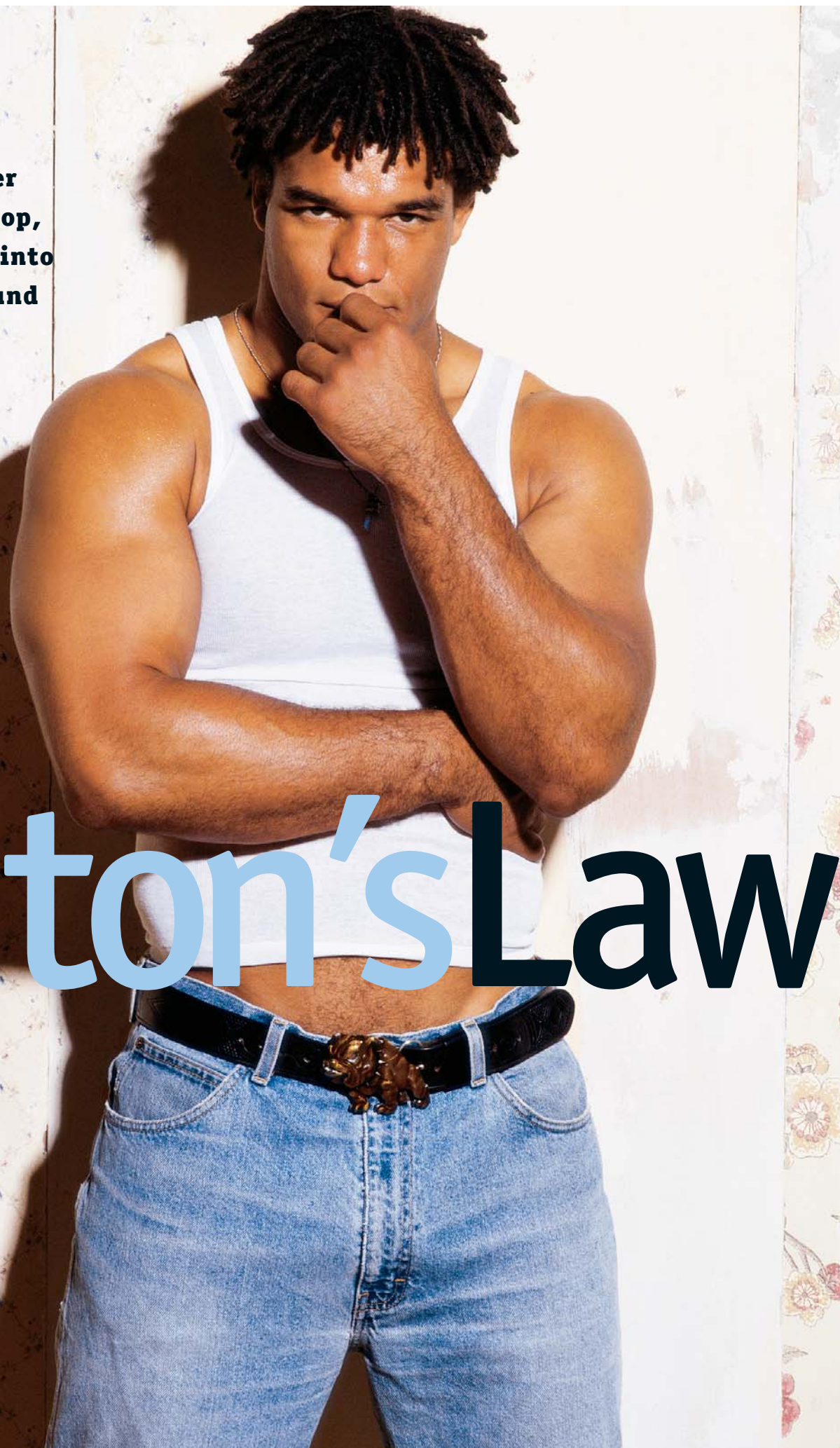
TREATS COFFEE EMPORIUM
Location: Student Centre
Price range: \$1.17 (small reg.) to \$3.04 (iced cappuccino)
Ambience: Ranges from tranquil to hectic. Outdoor tables. No music.
Notable: Also serves "fair trade" coffee (more expensive than regular). Coffee always fresh. Comfiest chairs on campus.

FALAFEL HUT VILLAGE
Location: York Lanes
Price range: \$1.10 (small reg.) to \$1.25 (large)
Ambience: Utilitarian. TV showing sports programs.
Notable: Known mostly for its food, but coffee is outstanding.



When he's not sewing or studying, ultimate fighter Carlos Newton likes to chop, kick and slam opponents into submission. His fans around the world love it.

BY MICHAEL TODD
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY LOZON



Newton's Law

JEDI IN TRAINING: Newton

CARLOS NEWTON, ONE OF THE TOP FIVE ULTIMATE FIGHTERS IN THE WORLD, steps out of his silver Porsche convertible (all paid for) and saunters over to our table for breakfast at a Newmarket diner. The 28-year-old Glendon student actually eats two breakfasts. Not surprising, I suppose, considering the soft-spoken martial arts expert has biceps the size of your thigh, trains six hours a day, and hangs 169 lbs. of pure muscle on a 5-foot-9-inch frame. So what is ultimate fighting? Think judo, jiu-jitsu, karate, tai chi, Greco-Roman wrestling, moo yea do, kuk sool wan, kickboxing, kung fu, hapkido, capoeira, akido, muay thai, kapu kuialua and other fighting styles all mixed into one. First man to give up or get knocked out loses.

Newton, a welterweight (155-170 lbs.), whose Japanese moniker is "The Ronin" (meaning wanderer), practises a form of martial arts he calls Dragonball Z jiu-jitsu and studies at the Warrior Martial Arts Centre in Newmarket (he's three-time Canadian jiu-jitsu champ). Newton started his fighting career at the age of four. "My dad taught me. He was a black belt," he says. The Ronin's first fight came at school over lunch money when he was a kid living in the British Virgin Islands. Then, at 10, Newton suddenly found himself in Canada, alone, without family. "We didn't have a lot of money and I was the one getting good marks so my parents decided to send me to Canada for an education."

Although he doesn't elaborate, it seems those were hard years for Newton, who grew up in Toronto's Jane-Finch community. He boarded with one of his public-school teachers for a time and continued his martial arts studies. "The whole experience toughened me, I suppose," says Newton. "You had to survive. It was just me."

The Wanderer is an apt nickname for Newton, who at 21 went to Japan for two years to immerse himself in the culture and language. He likes to spend as much time there as he can when not training or working on his York degree. Indeed, ultimate fighting has taken him all over the world, from the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas to "The Brawl at the Hall" (Royal Albert Hall, London), and Hungary, Thailand, Australia, Greece, Hong Kong and China. Even George W. Bush's stomping grounds – Texas.

Is UF dangerous? In Newton's opinion, it's "far safer" than football or hockey. "You'd never catch me playing football," he says. "I'd be scared to death." Nevertheless, reading down a list of dos and don'ts in the UF rule book doesn't exactly instill a sense of personal well-being. Foul play includes the use of any kind of: eye gouging, groin attacks, stomping a grounded opponent, spitting, kidney kicks, throat strikes, clawing or pinching of the flesh, hair pulling, head butts and biting. In its promotion materials, the Ultimate Fighting Championship organization claims no one has ever been seriously injured in a UFC event.

"Actually the refs are pretty strict," says Newton. "If there's any sign that you're wobbling after taking a hit, it's over." Fights are also governed by height and weight class (from lightweight to heavyweight), standardized boxing gloves etc. The main way to win is through your opponent's submission, signalled by a physical or verbal "tap out". Refs can also declare a technical knockout at any time, or judges can award a win based on scorecards.

For now, Newton is Canada's only reigning UF star. Sadly, he's better known in Japan than at home. In fact, it's not uncommon for him to draw crowds of 40,000-plus in the Land of the Rising Sun. Crowds that pay. And Newton has a special love for all things Japanese that perhaps explains why he's minoring in the language while majoring in psychology.

Newton already owns his own home. Not bad for a soft-spoken tough guy who claims he's really still a "Jedi in training", and likes to sew for relaxation. And, as if a brutally time-consuming regimen of training and studies isn't enough, Newton also somehow finds the energy to volunteer at Toronto's Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care twice a week. "I got the job through one of my York professors. He knew I was interested in behavioural neurology," he confides. "I find working with old people really fascinating. I enjoy their company. They've got a very different perspective on the world."

How long can Newton keep kicking butt, living the good life, and hanging out post-fight with celebs like Carmen Electra? "Probably until I'm 38," he says. "First I want to finish my BA. After that a PhD maybe. Then I want to continue working with seniors. I plan to open my own senior's residence this year as a business."

Thoughts to live by? "Life is really training for the martial arts, not vice versa," says Newton. "You have to learn respect for your opponent and yourself." For now, Newton is concentrating on being the best fighter in the world in his class – and maybe getting in a little stitching. ■



FOR GLOBE-TROTTING PHOTOGRAPHER VALERIE BURTON (BA '75, MFA '77), it all started on a vacation to Mexico 10 years ago. "I kind of got hooked on the Maya," she says. Her visits to local Mayan pueblos sparked a broader fascination with the native cultural festivals of Mexico – from masked processions to modern influences such as, yes, Halloween. Her work caught the attention of Canadian diplomats in Mexico, who helped her make an odyssey across Canada to do a similar series on native festivals in this country. The result is a series of shows of her photography from both nations, which went on display at the McMichael Gallery in Kleinburg, Ont., in September, and opened in the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City on Nov. 4, where it will help commemorate 60 years of diplomatic relations between Canada and Mexico. She is also taking part in a fall show about the Day of the Dead at the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum in Chicago.

In travelling around Mexico and Canada – where she gained access to ceremonies rarely seen by outsiders – Burton found some similarities between the nations. The festivals usually had a religious context, and they often blended traditional and modern elements. More importantly, she notes, "the festivals strengthen the cultures." But Burton is quick to note that she is an artist, not an anthropologist. "My primary objective is to make visually arresting images that stand on their own," she says.

For an academic view, she turned to another York alumna, University of Calgary anthropologist Julia Murphy, who wrote background text to accompany Burton's exhibits. The two met while Murphy was doing research in Mexico. Murphy, who has three post-graduate degrees from York (MES '91, MA '93, PhD '03), wrote that "Burton's photographic work testifies to the cultural creativity of the indigenous peoples of Canada and Mexico."

What's next for Burton? The Ottawa-based freelancer, who often works for international non-profit organizations such as CARE USA and Foster Parents Plan, is likely to be on a plane to somewhere. She's never short of willing clients. "Basically," she says, "I decide to go to a place and then start phoning people." ■

ARTISTS

Photographer Valerie Burton gets inside cultural festivals in Mexico and Canada.

Native Rites



BEHIND THE MASK: Women penitents await Holy Week procession in Taxco, Mexico; Left, painted wooden skulls on sale for Day of the Dead in Oaxaca

Native Rites



CELEBRATE: Clockwise from top left, vendor at Noongam powwow, Ottawa; parade of chiefs, Calgary Stampede; Pikani boy at Calgary Stampede's Indian Village; Canada Day grass dance, Ottawa

LITTLE DEVIL: All ready for Jardin de Niños (Nursery School) procession for the Day of the Dead, Oaxaca, Mexico

WE'VE ALL MET PEOPLE we call perfectionists. We might even admire them because they seem highly successful. But there can be a serious downside – particularly for students. Psychology Professor Gordon Flett, Canada Research Chair in Personality and Health in York's Faculty of Arts, knows the debilitating hallmarks well.

For more than a decade, Flett has been delving into the problems of perfectionistic procrastinators, focusing on students. The condition can so overwhelm students that they are unable to complete assignments or even finish a doctoral thesis. And sometimes they are so fearful of not measuring up that they even experience a “wish to die”.

With Professor Paul Hewitt of the University of British Columbia, with whom he published a book in 2002 entitled *Perfectionism: Theory, Research, and Treatment*, Flett has developed The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale. It describes three types of perfectionists: those who are hard on themselves (self-oriented), those who have exacting standards for others (other-oriented) and those who see others as demanding perfection from them (socially-prescribed).

Flett says it's clear that many perfectionistic students have an enormous fear of failure. They believe their professors, parents or peers expect them to be perfect, and feel they can't live up to their perceptions of how others want them to be. “These students then become concerned about making mistakes if they answer in class, make a presentation, or write an assignment.”

It's natural to want to do well on a test or essay, but when the wish to be perfect in those areas seeps into all areas of one's life, then it's extreme, Flett explains. “Students with self-critical tendencies start feeling that everyone is better than they are. Then they cannot accomplish anything, because they don't think what they're working on is good enough – even when they are getting excellent marks.”

Flett and Hewitt have also developed a scale that taps 25 thoughts, such as “I must be perfect.” The subjects indicate the frequency of these thoughts in the past week. “Once I saw a student circling the top rating for each question, and

laughing almost hysterically, saying, ‘This is my life! This is how I feel every day!’” says Flett. “Unfortunately, such thoughts are often accompanied by feelings of anxiety and depression.”

Counselling seems the obvious answer, and it is available through York's Counselling & Development Centre. The trouble is, “only a few brave perfectionists” concede that they need it, because they think they're failures to even admit to having a problem. Results of studies on perfectionistic students show that many didn't recognize that they needed help, and those who did had trouble opening up about themselves. For those who do seek assistance, Flett says, therapy can help by

teaching them to set more appropriate goals and training them in problem-solving skills, study skills and ways of shielding themselves from stress.

“A professor should encourage such students to seek help and emphasize that getting help is not a stigma,” advises Flett. “The message must get out to perfectionist students that they need to talk to others and share their feelings. They'll see they're not alone in this.” His advice to his own students is, “Break each assignment into components. Get the process going, instead of holding back an assignment until it's perfect, so you get feedback along the way.” Rather than perfection,

says Flett, students should strive for excellence.

As for why the problem strikes some people and not others, Flett says there is evidence that perfectionism runs in families, whether through biological or cultural causes, sometimes showing up in children as young as four or five. And there can be social expectations put upon people by parents, advertisers, the media, peers or work.

Is there anything good about being a perfectionist? Not a lot, even for those who seem very successful, because often they experience little self-satisfaction, says Flett, who is currently studying high-achievers who suffer burnout due to perfectionism. “People might point out that many perfectionists are physically fit,” he says, “but the downside is that they can become compulsive about it.”

As for Flett himself? He's definitely not a perfectionist. “In fact, I wish I were more methodical,” he says with a sigh. ■

‘They cannot accomplish anything, because they don't think what they're working on is good enough – even when they are getting excellent marks’

Psychologist Gordon Flett has charted how something that sounds good – perfectionism – can be very bad, especially for students.

BY CATHY CARLYLE



PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED

Vocal Folk

Emily Cohen and Omar Fairclough

Debating champs

IF YOU'RE A POLITICIAN looking for future speech writers, you might want to call Omar Fairclough, a fourth-year double major in history and social and political thought, or fourth-year Glendon international studies student Emily Cohen. Fairclough and Cohen beat 69 other Canadian university teams last March to clinch first prize for York at the Canadian University Society for Intercollegiate Debate's national championship held at McGill.

Fairclough, who lives in Pickering, Ont., says he comes from a family that "definitely likes to talk" and that in public school he was voted "kid most likely to become a lawyer." Cohen, a Victoria, BC, native, says she's always talked a lot too. "I started really early. Apparently around age one."

Debates are run according to formal parliamentary rules and teams usually debate serious topics, but not every issue is heavy-duty. Says Fairclough, "Our first debate in the national championship was, Should Wile E. Coyote Stop Chasing the Road Runner?" ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE



Roger Scannura

Top designer, York flamenco teacher

Changing Chords



ROGER SCANNURA BECAME HOOKED on the sorrowful melodies and complex rhythms of flamenco after hearing virtuoso guitarist Pepe Habichuela in a Toronto bar 30 years ago. The Roots Canada art director still makes annual pilgrimages to Spain to study the gypsy music that possesses his Maltese soul. "To the people at Roots, my music has been a sideline," he says. "But it's always been my mainline." Last year, when York invited him to teach flamenco guitar, Scannura hesitated, despite 30 years' practice and four CDs. He'd try one day a week. "I loved it. I couldn't wait for Mondays." Now, after an intense year developing Olympic team uniforms for four countries, including Canada, he's teaching three days a week – and handling Roots clients such as Ferrari and actor Russell Crowe the other two. At 52, Scannura will finally have time to finish composing an ambitious guitar concerto – "my work of a lifetime" – and perform more with his band Ritmo Flamenco. "Flamenco," says the son of a Spaniard, "is in my blood." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL PACEY



YOU DON'T HAVE TO TRAVEL thousands of miles to hear an ancient Chinese folk music tradition known as "silk and bamboo". Thanks to Kim Chow-Morris, a PhD music grad ('04) who developed and directs the Faculty of Fine Arts' courses in Chinese music, you can enjoy it right here in Toronto. Morris heads up the Yellow River Ensemble, whose specialty is Jiangnan sizhu, a home-grown style of music from the populous region south of the Yangzi river. She is an international dizi (bamboo flute) virtuoso, and one of the leading Chinese music performers in Canada. She spent more than six years studying Jiangnan sizhu with leading masters in China.

Yellow River members (CD in the works) have performed across Canada, the US, Britain and China, playing tunes like Rosy Clouds Chasing After the Moon, Purple Bamboo and Cowboy Song. The usual silk and bamboo ensemble consists of instruments like the dizi (bamboo flute), along with "soft" silk string instruments such as the erhu (python-skin bowed lute).

Do western ears like silk and bamboo? "It can take adults a while to understand, but kids intuitively enjoy the music, I think," says Morris. "They especially like the strange sounds the instruments make! It's always a big hit in schools." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN HYRNIUK

Kim Chow-Morris
Chinese music specialist

Silken Sounds

Our canine companions help bring out our humanity. **BY RICHARD TELEKY**

Talking Dogs

A **RABELLA, BIGFOOT, MORGAN AND ZOLI** – these are only a few of the faculty dogs who have spent part of their lives at York, growing up, attending literary readings, getting old, moving away and even dying. At a time when narrative theory fascinates scholars, dogs are of particular importance. Why? Because they're agents of narration, they prompt stories and often make it possible for strangers to tell them to each other.

Think of those old definitions of human beings – we're "tool-bearing", "language-using", "pot-making" creatures. To this list I'd like to add "dog-owning", because as far back as we go, dogs were beside us, helping define our humanity by the way we treated them. University campuses that allow their presence are more congenial places for them. Students at York have sat in my office laughing while they petted my pug, Zoli, or taken consolation from him while telling an upsetting story; they've sketched him, written poems for him, and even made pocket money for dog-sitting. Often students I'd never taught

Students sat in my office

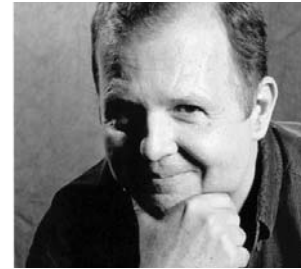
came up to me to ask, "Is that Zoli?" and then spoke of a family dog back home. Zoli always greeted them gustily, as if exclaiming, "Hey, a new friend." Dogs change public space, making it more liveable.

In late August 2003, Zoli, then eight-and-a-half, was diagnosed with mast-cell tumors, stage one, the least lethal. It's worth noting that veterinarians across North America are seeing an increase in cancer in younger dogs. From our environment? Who can say? But we ought to pay attention. After three surgeries, he began chemotherapy. I decided not to bring Zoli to campus any longer, although he'd come since he was a puppy and year after year charmed students who always wanted to know about his name (it's Hungarian). So Zoli spent my campus days at his vet's, now charming the young assistants and even befriending a small gray rabbit. Meanwhile, anyone who asked me about Zoli would learn a little about cancer and dogs.

My Toronto neighbourhood is a cliché of impersonal city

Richard Teleky teaches in the Faculty of Arts Humanities Division. His most recent novel is *Pack Up the Moon*.

living. Yet in no time people were asking why, after surgery, Zoli wore a large plastic collar. My explanation was met with their stories. One man told about a Wheaten terrier stolen from his home; a dignified woman in her 70s told of a dog lost, years ago, to divorce; another nodding acquaintance spoke of her own recent cancer diagnosis. Over the Christmas holiday, my mother was hospitalized for several weeks. Zoli accompanied me to our daily visits and slept on the bed beside her as patients, nurses and even a few doctors stopped to pet him and tell their stories. Public space was transformed again. This tells us a lot about the emotions below the surface of our alienated society. It's a truism that a dog-owner's blood pressure slows down when he pets a beloved animal. More impressive is that a stranger's dog can have a similar effect on a community.



Zoli died on March 31, 2004, the last day of classes. He had pancreatitis and his cancer had spread. The thought of this remains painful, but I wouldn't want it any other way – I have little use for the language of our culture that speaks of "healing" or "closure". As the American poet May Sarton wrote of her own dog's death, "there are some losses you can't absorb." But I can say that Zoli continued to affect public space. People in my neighbourhood, still really strangers, left notes and flowers, or phoned with kind words and more stories.

Recently, while buying a newspaper, I heard from one of the local dog people about a young woman who was at the corner parkette, grieving over a cancer diagnosis for her golden retriever. I stopped to talk with her and even recommended an excellent book I'd found after Zoli died, *The Loss of a Pet* by Wallace Sife. Though I'm not a fan of self-help books, I was glad to know this one. And I was glad to tell this stranger about my brave companion Zoli. She and I smiled tentatively, and she asked about the pug puppy at my side. I introduced Rennie. He will never replace Zoli, but he'll be himself while drawing out new stories from strangers. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN SCULLY